

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 AF-10 ARA-11 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10
ISO-00 SIG-03 MMO-01 DOE-15 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NASA-01 NSC-05
SOE-02 SS-15 SP-02 /150 R

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P 132102Z SEP 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 232261

INFORM CONSULS. FOR SCIATTS WHERE APPLICABLE

E.O. 11652:XGDS

TAGS: TSPA:XX

SUBJECT:REENTRY OF PEGASUS SPACECRAFT ASSEMBLY

REF: STATE 229977

HEREWITH PERTINENT PORTIONS OF STATE A-6343 (JULY 25,'73),
CONSTITUTING THE STANDING GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH SPACE
OBJECTS WHICH HAVE RETURNED TO EARTH, FOR USE IN CONNECTION
WITH REENTRY OF PEGASUS SPACECRAFT ASSEMBLY (REFTEL):

1. WHEN A SPACE OBJECT IMPACTS ON THE EARTH AND IS RE-
COVERED, A NUMBER OF CONSIDERATIONS AND INTERESTS MUST BE
TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. THESE INCLUDE THE SAFETY OF HUMAN
LIFE, LIABILITY, INTERNATIONAL TREATY COMMITMENTS, NATIONAL
SECURITY, AND INTELLIGENCE. IN ALL SPACE OBJECT CASES, IT
IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO INSURE

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THAT US INTERESTS ARE SERVED -- THAT INTELLIGENCE REQUIRE-
MENTS ARE MET TO THE FULLEST WHILE US TREATY COMMITMENTS
ARE FAITHFULLY OBSERVED. TIMELY AND ACCURATE REPORTING BY
POSTS OF THE RECOVERY OF SPACE OBJECTS BY HOST GOVERNMENTS
OR INDIVIDUALS WILL CONTRIBUTE GREATLY TOWARD ASSURING THAT
ALL US INTERESTS ARE MET TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT FEASIBLE.

2. ANY US OFFICIAL WHO LEARNS THAT A SPACE OBJECT HAS BEEN OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN RECOVERED BY A FOREIGN COUNTRY SHOULD REPORT THIS INFORMATION IMMEDIATELY TO THE CHIEF OF MISSION WHO IN TURN SHOULD INSURE THAT AN APPROPRIATELY DETAILED REPORT IS TELEGRAPHED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WILL INSURE THAT THE INFORMATION REPORTED IS DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT DELAY TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES. CONCURRENT TECHNICAL REPORTING VIA DEFENSE ATTACHE OR INTELLIGENCE CHANNELS IS PERMISSIBLE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHIEF OF MISSION. SUCH REPORTS SHOULD INCLUDE THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AS AN INFO ADDRESSEE. SIMILARLY, ALL ACTION INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE COORDINATED IN WASHINGTON. ANY INSTRUCTIONS CALLING FOR APPROACHES TO THE HOST GOVERNMENT WILL BE SENT TO THE MISSION VIA DEPARTMENT OF STATE CHANNELS.

3. UNLESS THE CHIEF OF MISSION CONSIDERS IT INADVISABLE, A POST SHOULD SEEK THE PERMISSION OF A HOST GOVERNMENT TO EXAMINE ANY SUSPECTED SPACE OBJECT WHICH HAS BEEN RECOVERED IN ORDER TO DETERMINE ITS ORIGIN. SHOULD THE HOST GOVERNMENT INDICATE UNAMBIGUOUSLY THAT IT BELIEVES THE OBJECT NOT TO BE OF US ORIGIN, A POST SHOULD STILL SEEK TO INSPECT THE OBJECT NOTING THE INTEREST OF THE US ON TECHNICAL GROUNDS IN SPACE OBJECTS IN GENERAL. UNTIL THE IDENTITY OF AN OBJECT HAS BEEN CONCLUSIVELY DETERMINED, SPECULATION REGARDING OWNERSHIP SHOULD BE AVOIDED. THIS IS PARTICULAR-
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LY IMPORTANT IN CASES INVOLVING INJURY TO PERSONS OR DAMAGE TO PROPERTY WHICH COULD RESULT IN CLAIMS. IF QUESTION OF LIABILITY COMES UP IN ANY CONTEXT, US OFFICIALS SHOULD LIMIT THEIR RESPONSE TO POINTING OUT THAT INTERNATIONAL LEGAL MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED TO DEAL WITH SUCH ISSUES AND THAT THE USG WILL WITHOUT QUESTION FULLY DISCHARGE ITS INTERNATIONAL TREATY OBLIGATIONS.

4. IN THE EXAMINATION OF AN OBJECT, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION SHOULD BE OBTAINED AND REPORTED TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE.

A. PRE-IMPACT OBSERVATIONS, DIRECTION OF TRAJECTORY, NUMBER OF OBJECTS OBSERVED, TIME OF IMPACT, CHARACTERISTICS OF IMPACT AREA, AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF RECOVERY.

B. DESCRIPTION OF ANY INJURY OR DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE OBJECT. PROVIDE PRECISE DETAILS TO EXTENT POSSIBLE, BUT IN MAKING INQUIRIES AVOID STIMULATING CLAIMS, ESPECIALLY TRIVIAL OR NUISANCE CLAIMS.

C. DESCRIPTION OF ANY IDENTIFYING MARKS OR LETTERS.

D. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PHYSICAL NATURE AND CONDITION OF THE OBJECT, INCLUDING ACTUAL OR ESTIMATED DIMENSIONS, WEIGHT, MATERIAL, CONSTRUCTION, ETC.

E. IF POSSIBLE, PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE OBJECT (PREFERABLY IN COLOR) FROM VARIOUS ANGLES USING A DIMENSIONAL REFERENCE SUCH AS A RULER OR PACK OF CIGARETTES.

F. ANY OTHER INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT BE HELPFUL IN IDENTIFYING THE OBJECT OR OF INTEREST TO USG.

G. THE EXTENT OF LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE, DEGREE OF PUBLIC INTEREST AROUSED, AND THE REACTION OF THE HOST
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GOVERNMENT, DESCRIBING THE VARIOUS HOST GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED TOGETHER WITH THE DEGREE AND LEVEL OF OFFICIAL INTEREST. ALSO, ANY INDICATION OF INTEREST OR LACK THEREOF ON THE PART OF OTHER EMBASSIES (IN PARTICULAR SOVIET EMBASSY).

5. BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE POST, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER INTERESTED AGENCIES WILL DETERMINE SUBSEQUENT ACTION REQUIRED. UNTIL SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS ARE RECEIVED, NO REQUEST EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO HOST COUNTRY TO TAKE POSSESSION OF A SPACE OBJECT, REGARDLESS OF ITS IDENTITY, OR TO REMOVE IT FROM HOST COUNTRY'S CUSTODY. IF THE HOST COUNTRY OFFERS US OFFICIALS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BORROW OR REMOVE A SAMPLE FROM A NON-US SPACE OBJECT, THE OFFER SHOULD BE APPROPRIATELY ACKNOWLEDGED AND REFERENDUM AND PROMPTLY REPORTED TO WASHINGTON. NO FURTHER ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN UNTIL INSTRUCTIONS ARE RECEIVED.

6. IF THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE OBJECT IS OF US ORIGIN, THE HOST GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ASKED TO INSURE THAT THE OBJECT IS NOT IN ANY WAY ALTERED PRIOR TO POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION AND POSSIBLE REQUEST FOR ITS RETURN.

7. THE OUTER SPACE TREATY OBLIGATES A PARTY TO RETURN TO THE LAUNCHING STATE SPACE OBJECTS AND THEIR COMPONENT PARTS WHICH RETURN TO EARTH ON ITS TERRITORY. THE RETURN OF ASTRONAUTS AND OBJECTS AGREEMENT ELABORATES ON THIS OBLIGATION, REQUIRING THAT A PARTY MUST NOTIFY A LAUNCHING STATE AND THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL WHEN IT LEARNS THAT A SPACE OBJECT HAS LANDED ON ITS TERRITORY. THIS TREATY FURTHER PROVIDES THAT SUCH AN OBJECT MUST BE RETURNED IF A REQUEST FOR RETURN IS MADE BY THE LAUNCHING STATE. THE LAUNCHING
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STATE MAY BE REQUIRED TO FURNISH IDENTIFYING DATA PRIOR TO
RETURN OF THE OBJECT. THE OUTER SPACE LIABILITY CONVENTION
ELABORATES RULES AND PROCEDURES CONCERNING LIABILITY FOR

DAMAGE CAUSED BY SPACE OBJECTS AND PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION
FOR SUCH DAMAGE.

FOR PARIS: PLEASE PASS ALSO TO NER/MORRISON. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPACECRAFT, POLICIES, REENTRY VEHICLES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: LKAHN:VML
Enclosure: DC ADJUSTED PER CHICHESTER/KAHN TELCON
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780373-0210
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780970/aaaacfv1.tel
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Reference: 78 STATE 229977
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1447626
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REENTRY OF PEGASUS SPACECRAFT ASSEMBLY
TAGS: TSPA, XX, US
To: ALL POSTS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f2ee5751-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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